

to the bishops, several of whom are very poor, to grant divorces for the sake of the fees.

Friday was a severe fast in the Patriarch's household, as in all others. The fasts of the Syrian Church, it has been said, "can only be described as prodigious." A

Syrian fast means serious self-denial, for it involves not only abstinence from meat, but from fish, honey, eggs, milk, butter, cheese, and all animal products, and the Syrian eats nothing but rice cooked in walnut oil, raisins, walnuts, treacle, beans, plain potatoes, and bread. All

Wednesdays and Fridays in the year this strict *regimen* is adhered to, and the members of the Old Church also fast for fifty days in Lent, and twenty-five in Advent, and keep the very severe three days' fast of the Ninevites. Most

adults keep also the fast of St. Mary, the first fourteen days of August. No religious observance is more rigidly adhered to by the nation than these severe and prolonged abstinences, and it is difficult for the Syrians to believe in the piety of any who do not, by the same methods, mortify the body and bring it into subjection.

Mar Auraham, son of Marta, a man of twenty-six, Patriarch-designate, and a bishop without a diocese, has returned, and spent part of yesterday evening in my room. He looks delicate, but has a bright, intelligent, charming face, and his conversation was thoughtful and interesting. He really cares about his church and its discipline, is regarded as honoxirable and straight-forward in a marked degree, and as

preferring the  
spiritual to the temporal interests of his  
nation. He  
is apparently a warm friend of the English  
Mission,  
and if he should succeed to the chair of  
Mar Shimun  
great progress might be expected; but  
intrigues are surging  
round him, and the patriarchal family is not  
without its  
ambitions, to which he may possibly be  
sacrificed.

The succession to the Patriarchate and  
Episcopate is